

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 03531 210849Z

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9685

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 3531

FOR ATHERTON FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: AREC, LE

SUBJ: FILMS FOR AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

1. I HAVE BEEN GREATLY SURPRISED TO DISCOVER THAT, DESPITE THE FACT THAT AMERICAN PERSONNEL HERE HAVE BEEN UNDER INSTRUCTIONS TO REMAIN IN THEIR HOMES AT NIGHT FOR THE LAST YEAR, THIS POST IS NOT A REGULAR RECIPIENT OF FEATURE FILMS FROM ANY AGENCY. AS YOU ARE AWARE, BOREDOM CAN SERIOUSLY ERODE MORALE AND I FEEL THAT CONDITIONS HERE FULLY JUSTIFY AN ACTIVE FILM PROGRAM. LOCAL MOVIE THEATERS HAVE NOT BEEN OPEN FOR THE LAST SIX MONTHS ON ANY REGULAR BASIS AND, EVEN IF THEY WERE, WE CANNOT NOW FORESEE PERMITTING PERSONNEL TO FREQUENT THEM.

2. I WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL, AS I AM SURE THE ENTIRE STAFF WOULD BE, IF THE DEPARTMENT CAN EXPEDITIOUSLY WORK OUT SOME ARRANGEMENT TO PROVIDE GOOD FEATURE FILMS ON A REGULAR SCHEDULE. ONE FACTOR TO BE KEPT IN MIND IS THAT WE ARE OPERATING WITH VERY LIMITED STAFF AND HAVE MINIMAL CAPABILITY TO DEVOTE SCARCE PERSONNEL RESOURCES TO BUREAUCRATIC RED TAPE INVOLVED IN ADMINISTERING SUCH A PROGRAM. I DO NOT KNOW WHAT DEVICES ARE POSSIBLE, BUT ONE POTENTIAL ALTERNATIVE WOULD BE AN ARRANGEMENT, SUCH AS I UNDERSTAND WORKS IN SOME AF POSTS, WHEREBY POST MANAGEMENT OFFICER CONCLUDES CONTRACT WITH DISTRIBUTOR DIRECTLY. IN ANY

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CASE, I LEAVE IT UP TO THE DEPARTMENT TO FIND THE BEST

MEANS OF MEETING THIS PRESSING NEED.

BROWN

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